

LESSON 32

TWENTY-THIRD PATH

'The twenty-third Path is the Stable Intelligence and is so called because it has the virtue of consistency among all numerations.'

The twenty-third Path lies between the Geburah and Hod and is called 'Stable Intelligence'. The entire concept here is one of consistency. The two sephiroth that balance this Path give rise to a type of punishment (from Geburah) or restriction while the lower sephira tells of splendour. Since Geburah is the first of the two sephiroth, the restriction or punishment must be imposed first to form the splendour and it is through this that the stability is formed. 'No pain, no gain', is a modern expression that applies quite well here and reminds us that no development can occur without birth and growing pains.

Mem is the letter of this Path and has a numerical value of 40. Other words of the same value are GZL meaning 'to take away by violence', ChBL 'to bind or connect', YL 'cry out', LAT 'to hide or cover' and LTA 'keep close to the ground'. All of these reinforce the harsh aspect of Mem's nature and shows the merging of the higher forces into the lower. As a word, Mem has a value of 90 and equates to words such as PY meaning 'mouth of a well or entrance' and SL meaning 'raise or exalt'. This relates to going into an opening and being raised up or exalted (in spirit).

de O'livet considers that Mem as a consonant relates to a nasal sound. As a symbol it depicts that of the mother which shows creativity and productivity. Its grammatical influence is that of the passive feminine state of being. When it is placed at the beginning of a word it shows a pliable state while at the end it becomes a collective sign which unites with the abstract essences of the word. It can be described as an expressive article in which the names or movement of an action is merely an instrument which is divided in essence.

The Tarot card associated to this Path is the Hanged Man, which is a complex form. It depicts a man in a rocky cove or cave suspended by his feet with his head in a triangle. The most obvious concept at first glance is that the individual is undergoing hard times and possibly even some form of punishment. The triangle around his head however shows us that he is being immersed in a situation, a type of baptism, which results in a union of both lower and higher forces. Carl Jung stated that the purpose of pain is to make man more aware of himself and this is a situation that fits this card. The man undergoes a type of illumination through ordeal and as such the old concepts of the psyche are lost and a new reconstructed individual emerges from the sea of chaos.

The Egyptian goddess of this Path is Heqet who is usually depicted with a frog's head and is linked to both death and birth. Legend has it that she (along with Shu) were born from the

mouth of Ra. Also she was associated with the midwife as she was present at the birth of the creation. Heqet was in fact a goddess of transition and is looked on to ease the transformation from one state of existence to another (such as in death and rebirth). Though she is sometimes associated to Hathor Heqet, she is a goddess in her own right as a fertility diety.

Poseidon is the Greek diety associated to this Path and is the god of the sea as well as lakes and rivers. One particular aspect of Poseidon's adventures applies here and that is the battle he had with the giant Polybutes (whom Poseidon hurled a cliff at) thus drowning him in the ocean off the islet of Nisyros. This aspect of Poseidon's exploits is shown in the tarot card the 'Hanged Man' who is in fact Polybutes submerged in the the inlet in which Poseidon carved out his doom. Another Greek association here is the god Oceanus.

Neptune is the Roman god linked here. He was the son of Saturn and Ops and brother of Juno, Pluto and Jupiter. He is usually shown in a chariot of shells drawn by dolphins or horses.

One of the magical weapons of this Path is the cross of suffering. Though linked to the crucifixion, when used in the terms of the R.R.et A.C, in esoteric terminology it relates to an aspect of the 5=6 grade ceremony when the postulant is literally bound to a cross and made to take the obligation. During this part of the ceremony the second Adept says (while holding the rose cross out in front of him);

'The symbol of suffering is the symbol of strength. wherefore bound as thou art, strive to raise this holy symbol in thy hands, for he that will not strive shall not attain.'

The cup and wine which are also associated here are a continuation of the cross theme and are the instruments from which the bound postulant is anointed on the hands, feet, heart and brow.

The virtue of this Path is spiritual initiation and is the point where all suffering and hardship start to make sense and this realisation is the first phase of illumination. This is where understanding and appreciation come after stress. In modern terms it is where one reaches the breaking point, though here its esoteric significance is realised for what it is, initiation into the higher realms. Spiritual initiation, like the eastern concept of satori has many different levels.

The vice of this Path is estrangement. Here one has suffered so much that all the suffering is blocked up. All the lessons that one has come by are now kept from day to day consciousness which effectively prevents a merging of the mind and body which would give illumination. This is because the present mode of consciousness finds it cannot cope with the day to day pressures and tries to escape by blocking things out. It shows the psyche is not yet under control or ready to accept the present lessons one has been learning. The only way out of it is to try and consciously corner the psyche by facing up to reality.

The magical powers of this Path are quite varied and cover

such subjects as talismatic work and crystal gazing. All of these of course relate to the impregnation of the lower forces by the higher. This is the ability to command the higher powers to come and manifest themselves in this plane of existence. To be able to do this shows that the adept can call on his knowledge of spiritual hierarchies and yet still be able to control and direct them into performing a desired task.

A mineral drug associated here is potassium which affects the body by taking away its waste products. Along with other elements it helps regulate the water control in the body. Fundamentally potassium is a diuretic that purifies the body's internal mechanism. Any type of mental or physical stress draws heavily on the body's supply of this mineral so it is important to regulate its intake through liver, fruit and vegetables.

The vegetable drug of this Path is a tincture of Artemisa (Artemisia dracunculus) or Tarragon as it is sometimes called. An infusion of this drug is said to induce psychic dreams as well as having both culinary and medicinal values. As an oil it is used in talismatic rituals to act as a catalyst in bringing the higher forces through to impregnate the talisman. Also if taken internally (as an oil) it produces a relaxing effect and allows the higher forces to act through ones aura using much the same technique as a medium does.

The tattwa applied to this Path is called Apas which relates to the water element and is depicted by a silver crescent. By

direction it is a downward movement with the keyword to describe its function being 'contraction'. It relates to any type of liquid formation and represents the sense of taste with the tongue being the body organ that it is most related to.

The Indian diety associated here is Sarasvati, who was originally a goddess of the rivers and waters but later grew to a diety who represents wisdom and music. As a form she is usually shown as a beautiful woman with four arms and is generally seated on a lotus.

The gemstone of this Path is the Beryl or Aquamarine. Legend has it that any one who wears beryl is unable to be defeated in battle, and has his intellectual capacity expanded. Other attributions associated to it are, that it can keep a married couple together by being able to rekindle lost or waining love; Andreas, Bishop of Ceasarea in the 5th century wrote the following on this stone:

'The Beryl, imitating the colours of the sea and of air, and not unlike jacinth, seems to suggest the admirable Thomas (St. Thomas), especially as he made a long journey by sea, and even reached the Indies, was sent by God to preach salvation to the peoples of that region.'

The Beryl also gained some fame as a shewstone in which some could make images appear. In this type of clairvoyant work it remains as yet unsurpassed.

One of the plants associated here is Watercress (Nasturtium

officinale) which is usually found in streams and usually has a high content of manganese in it which is used as a blood purifier. Another plant that can be classed here is that of kelp which is found in the ocean and is used as a type of cleanser for the body as it has a high iodine content, it works mainly on the thyroid and is an ideal body toner.

Willow as an aromatic applies to this Path. An incense can be made up from the leaves, bark, or both. Its ritual association is to death and rebirth but also it is used for love, attraction and for divination and protection. Willow incense has often been used by many civilisations in fertility rites. Also it has been used by a number of sages who use the shewstone (crystal ball) and is said to help prevent illusion as well as obsession. Another aromatic that can be used here is Verbena, which is widely used as an enchanting aromatic and is often worn by a woman who wishes to attract the attentions of a particular individual.

The order of beings associated here are the varieties of water spirits such as the Nymphs, Undines and Nereids. The Nymphs generally come under the water spirits who reside not only in the sea but in any form of stream or river. Though there are both male and female Undines they have mainly been depicted by men as females who were young and beautiful. Offerings by ancient cultures to them included milk, honey and oil. The Nereids were mainly associated to the ocean and were said to be the daughters of Doris and Nereus and had the power to calm rough seas, all

were under the will of Neptune who commanded them to attend the needs of the ocean. Sailors often offered sacrifices to them for safe and prosperous voyages.

The Supreme Elemental King of this world is called Thahebyobeaatan while the Element King of the spirits is Niksa. The Demonic King of Water is called Ariton who also goes by the name of Egin (from the Hebrew root OGN "delay" or "hinder") which is said to be from the Hebrew root ORH "to bear oneself" or "be naked". Mathers considered that it may have been taken from the Greek word Arhreton meaning "secret" or "mysterious" with an emphasis on the negative aspect. The Greek root Aix "goat" also may be a possible origin for this word. Ariton has 22 servants under him.

The Archangel related to this Path is Michael who is associated to the cardinal point of the west. Michael is of course the archangel of both water and of the Sephiroth of Hod. The chief ruler of water is in fact Tharsis (ThRShIS=970), this relates to other words of the same value such as MLTz meaning "smoothness and slipperiness" and RAaN meaning "flourishing" which show a distinct relationship to water. The root ThR means "turn around" or "circular arrangements" while ShI which means "tribute, justice". These collectively show that Tharsis relates to a watery form that nourishes (in the sense of a gift or tribute). The angel of this Path is Taliahad while the Cardinal Direction that water represents in the West and is known by the Hebrew name of Maim.

The Holy River associated to this Path is Gihon: 'And the name of the second River is gihon; the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Cush (Ethiopia).

The Whale is a mammal associated to this Path and in general relates to anything swallowed, absorbed or concealed. The biblical story of Jonah and the Whale is a good example of this. In modern times however the Whale has developed a whole new set of symbols and relates to the merging of the higher and lower forces which also hints at resurrection, rebirth and regeneration. It also relates to the soul incarnate passing through its karmic sufferings.

ASSOCIATIONS

YETZIRATIC TEXT:	STABLE INTELLIGENCE
HEBREW LETTER:	MEM
TAROT:	HANGED MAN
EGYPTIAN DIETY:	HEQET
GREEK DIETY:	POSEIDON
ROMAN DIETY:	NEPTUNE
ELEMENT:	WATER
PLANET:	NEPTUNE
MAGICAL WEAPON:	CROSS OF SUFFERING, CUP & WINE
VIRTUE:	SPIRITUAL INITIATION
VICE:	ESTRANGEMENT
MAGICAL POWER:	TALISMANIC WORK, CRYSTAL GAZING, ETC
MINERAL DRUG:	POTASSIUM
VEGETABLE DRUG:	TINCTURE OF ARTEMISA (TARRAGON)
TATTWA:	APAS
INDIAN ASSOCIATION:	SARASVATI
GEMSTONE:	BERYL, AQUAMARINE
PLANT:	WATERCRESS, KELP
AROMATIC:	WILLOW, VERBENA
ORDER OF BEINGS:	WATER SPIRITS
ANGEL - ARCH:	MICHAEL
ANIMAL:	WHALE
CARDINAL POINT:	WEST (MAIM)
ELEMENTAL RULER:	THARIS
DEMONIC PRINCE:	AZAEAL

LESSON 33

TWENTY-FOURTH PATH

'The Twenty-fourth Path is the Imaginative Intelligence and it is so called because it gives likeness to similitudes which are created in like manner similar to its harmonious elegancies'

This twenty fourth Path connects Tiphareth and Netzach and is called 'Imaginative Intelligence' because it is the prototype for those energies of like manner who come after it, for the outward form always follows the hidden law. Thus from chaos is produced harmony, just as a beautiful flower is produced from decaying matter. This adequately describes the esoteric concepts of death. All things that die in this plane of existence are really not decayed matter but transmuted energy. Using the words ascribed to Hermes Trismegistos 'Whatever is below is like that which is above', one can conceive that the spiritual level in which the soul resides also undergoes a transformation of sorts during the physical death.

The Hebrew letter associated to this Path is Nun which means fish. Nun has a value of 50 and relates to other words of the same value such as BMCh meaning "to be high or elevated", MTA meaning "reach unto" or "come to", TMA "pollute" and kL "comprehend". All of these easily relate to death and the state of both the soul and the body during this period of adjustment. The word Nun has a value of 106 and equates to words such as BDQ meaning

'breach', DBQ meaning 'close to or attained' and QV meaning 'thread or line'. All of these show varying aspects of the transition period.

According to de O'Livet, Nun is symbolic of the image of the son of man. The original Hebrew glyph actually represented seed or fruit (Nun is also the verb 'to sprout') and from this its esoteric significance has developed even further so that in many respects it has hidden associations to both Yod and Vau. As a grammatical sign it relates to being brought into existence while in its final form it is augmentative.

The Tarot card associated here is 'Death' and is amply named as it describes beautifully the whole concept of this Path's energies. This trump depicted a skeleton brandishing a reaper and is a typical archetype concept for the "grim reaper", which to a certain extent is latent in us all. The scattered body parts in the card relate to the fact that he makes no distinctions between kings and commoners. The eagle depicted in the card shows the transmigration of the soul departing from the bodies and soaring to newer heights of existence.

The Egyptian myth related to this Path is that of Apepi who is usually depicted as a serpent. It was he who attacked Ra and was beaten each day. Apepi was in fact a symbol of the darkest hour of the night. The fight each day with Ra was to try and prevent the sun god from spreading his warmth and goodness over the land. Since Ra was everything good and light, Apepi was

everything dark and vile and was the personification of evil.

One of the Greek myths associated to this Path is the torture of Prometheus on Mount Caucasus by the eagle sent by Zeus, as punishment for his thefts and tricks played upon the gods. The legend states that the eagle would feed upon on the liver of Prometheus by day, which would then regenerate and grow back to its normal size at night. This whole episode was to be repeated day after day on the Titan who never wavered in his hate for Zeus and his desire to overthrow him. The suffering was said to have lasted for 30 years when Prometheus was rescued by Heracles (with the consent of Zeus).

The Roman myth of this Path relates to Vertumnus who was known as the 'Changling'. He was an agriculture diety who wanted to seduce Pomana but in order to surprise her he had to become different forms, from a labourer to an old woman. The transformations that Vertumnus underwent is the main point of consideration here as it shows victory or attainment after a succession of changes. Vertumnus is usually shown as a young man crowned with flowers and covered up to the waist, holding fruit in his right hand and the horn of plenty in his left.

Those individuals born under the Sun sign of this Path, Scorpio, are what one would call natures investigators. They are individuals who do things at a very deep level and as such have very strong intellectual traits. Because of this depth of feeling they do things in extremes. They have a strong sense of emotion

and rarely forgive an ill done to them; if an opportunity arrives they will try and seek revenge and pay back the ill done to them multifold. On the whole Scorpions are secretive but imaginative individuals who can be quick tempered if put to the test.

The constellation of Scorpio (Scorpion) in Hebrew is called Akrah meaning "conflict". In Arabic it is called Al Akrah "wounding the one who comes" and in Coptic is called Isidis "oppression or attack". There are over 45 stars in this constellation with the brightest being Cor Scorpii (heart of the scorpion) which is sometimes called Antares "The wound". The star in the tip of the tail is called Lesath "the perverted". Ptolemy says that the bright stars in front of the body of Scorpio have an effect similar to that of Mars, and also Saturn (in part). The three stars in the body of the Scorpion have much the same effect as Mars and a little like Jupiter. Those in the sections of the tail are like Saturn and a small influence of Venus. Those in the sting of the tail are like Mercury and Mars.

The magical weapon of this Path is the pain of the oath or obligation. Here one is bound to ones Higher Genius with the concept being that if the oath is broken the higher genius will punish the individual concerned in its own way. The obligation of the 5=6 ritual of the Adeptus minor grade of the R.R. et A.C. (which is what is referred to here) literally breaks through the various layers of the kabbalistic soul and anchors in the postulant a firm commitment. This commitment also supplies a vital link with the deepest aspects of the higher self, which is used

as a life line or beacon for the lower self to climb and merge with its upper counterpart for the higher in the lower (and vice versa) and must be acknowledged due to the obligation.

The virtue of this Path is transformation. Here individuals are literally transformed into a higher echelon. This type of transformation is in fact a fundamental urge to merge and communicate on levels other than the mundane. The spiritual value lying deep within us all makes us slowly transform to a higher code of ethics and ideals, and gradually merge into the area Jungians call the 'collective unconscious'. Here directions and guidance is seen and felt as a unified form or pattern working to a group plan. It is in this area in the building of new ideas and structures that is based on, 'in touch awareness', which can only be based on ones personal experiences.

The vice of this Path is introversion. While the virtue of the Path opens the individual up to a whole new level of experience the vice obstructs this by focusing and narrowing the scope of the individual. One then becomes aware of his own farseeing experiences in terms of lust, control and power, all of which stem from introversion of this Path's energies. As such these people not only cause misery for others but do irreparable damage to their own karmic existence. They get into a whirlpool of action and thought from which there is virtually no escape.

The magical attainment of this Path is necromancy, the ability to raise and converse with a spirit of a deceased

person. This is not to be confused with mediumship which is a somewhat passive state in which the vehicle of the medium is used as a receptacle for spiritual energies to come through. In necromancy one directs the spirit to perform the desired task and that is the difference, which can be summed up in one key word-control. This is not a very appealing magical power but it is still a power nevertheless and as such must be treated with a certain amount of respect. In necromancy one calls forth the Nephesch, Ruach, Chiah and Neshamah of the deceased and once again unites them into an organism. In ancient times the necromancer usually obtained a body part of the deceased and used it as a key or link to bring back the dead by making the soul retrace its steps towards unification. This linking, though, only appears in Assiah and can cause havoc for the spirit and necromancer. Though there is a fine line between this and evocation, there is definately a line, and that is the use of a body part (usually obtained from a robbed grave in ancient times). Evocation uses one plane only while necromancy uses several with Assiah as its manifestation point. There are a number of other points of difference between necromancy and evocation which are not be pertinent to this lesson.

The mineral drug of this Path is Calcium sulphate (plaster of Paris). Fundamentally this is known as a healing cell salt which eliminates worn out blood cells by water extraction. Apart from this Calcium sulphate puts a lining on the stomach and other organs. This creates a form of protection from adverse body acidity. If there is a lack of this salt in the body system this

causes a disruption in the metabolic processes, resulting among other things in all types of skin eruptions. Also if there is a deficiency of this cell salt in the system it can cause impotency in males and barrenness in females.

One of the vegetable drugs associated here is an extract of Valerian. This is a composite of alkaloids such as velerine and chatine, which have a rejuvenation type effect on the cerebral spinal system.

The Indian association to this Path is the Kundalini. This is considered by some as the ultimate force in the human body and has been called the "serpent power", a term coined by Sir John Woodroffe. Kundalini was in fact shown as a diety as well as a vast terrifying power within the self which can be raised to travel through the various chakra centers, thus unblocking and modifying each to work in harmony with each other so that illumination occurs. Raising the kundaline up through the spinal column can be a terrifying experience for an individual whether he or she is prepared for it or not, and during this transition period it can cause a lot of psychic and physical illnesses. Once there is union with the lotus chakra the kundaline then returns to its residence in the base of the spine, but it has left a clear path in the body for potential growth and spiritual development.

One of the gemstones here is Malachite which is derived from the Greek word "malackee" meaning "mallow". It has a soft green colour that resembles the malachite plant. Legend has it that

this stone protects children at night from evil influences and protects the wearer from any approaching calamity by breaking into various pieces and thus forewarning him. In Italy this stone was usually cut in a triangular shape and mounted in silver and worn as a protective amulet against the 'Evil Eye'. This gem was used extensively in Moslem mosques as a form of repelling negative influences and keeping the area that contained it pure.

The Cactus plant and flower (*Cactus grandiflorus*) is associated here because of the its watery interior which is a life saving virtue in the desert, and for the poisonous spikes which can have the opposite effect. An infusion of the plant can help in kidney and bladder complaints as well as cardiac conditions. Generally the magical influence of this plant is a form of protection against theft and is often planted around the house (in a circle) with this in mind. It is a fiery masculine symbol that is said to be able to ward off negative influences.

Opaponax resin is the aromatic of this Path. The word Opaponax comes from the Greek meaning "Healing juice". This resin was used as a healing incense for bad cases of illness. It has not been used in any major cultural rituals as its effect was to cure the sick. Its magical properties is said to drive out the evil causing the illness.

The order of beings linked here are the Lamiae which were said to be a race of monsters (in Africa) who resemble women from the waist up but have the underbody of a serpent. Like sirens

they attracted strangers to them with their hypnotic beauty and the hissing-like sound they made (they did not have the power of speech) so that they could devour their prey. They were also known as devourers of children and were sometimes thought to be witches. Legend states that they were descended from the affair of Jupiter and Lamia and the children from this union were born deformed due to Juno's curse on them. Lamia became insane at this horror and in her grief devoured all children who came her way.

The archangel of this Path is Barkiel which is a name that has many variations but primarily means "Lightning of God", it is said to have power of this element and helps those who invoke him in any game of chance. Barkiel (BRKYAL=263) relates to other words of the same numerical value such as GRS meaning "break to pieces" and SGR meaning "shut or lock up". This shows Barkiel is able to shatter (like the lightning flash) and shut away those who displease him. The root BR means "to purify" while BRK(F) means to "lie down, rest on one knees" which shows the godliness of this angels nature.

The Scorpion is one of the animals of this Path and to a certain extent shows the destruction of the lower aspects of man so that the higher can develop. There are also certain self destruct ramifications in connection with the Scorpion, for it shows the mortality of the outer shell of man which can be ended at almost any time (shown by the sting in the Scorpions tail).

ASSOCIATIONS

YETZIRATIC TEXT:	IMAGINATIVE INTELLIGENCE
HEBREW LETTER:	NUN
TAROT:	DEATH
EGYPTIAN DIETY:	APEPI
GREEK DIETY:	PROMETHEUS
ROMAN DIETY:	VERTUMNUS
PLANET:	SCORPIO
MAGICAL WEAPON:	OATH OR OBLIGATION
VIRTUE:	TRANSFORMATION
VICE:	INTROVERSION
MAGICAL POWER:	NECROMANCY
MINERAL DRUG:	CALCIUM SULPHATE
VEGETABLE DRUG:	VALERIAN
INDIAN ASSOCIATION:	KUNDALINE
GEMSTONE:	MALACHITE
PLANT:	CACTUS
AROMATIC:	OPAPONAX RESIN
ORDER OF BEINGS:	LAMIAE
ANGEL - ARCH:	BARKIEL
ANIMAL:	SCORPION